

REMARKS

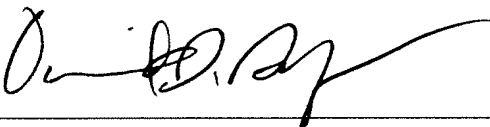
Upon entry of this amendment, claims 9, 10, 12-15, 17, 20, and 21 will be pending. Claims 9 and 17 have been amended, new claims 20 and 21 have been added, and claims 16 and 18 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 15, 17, and 18 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowed if re-written in independent form including the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. In order to advance prosecution, claim 18 has been presented in independent form by amending independent claim 9 to incorporate the features of allowable claim 18 and intervening claim 16. Accordingly, claim 9 and all claims depending from claim 9 should be allowed.

Additionally, Applicants have presented allowable claims 15 and 17 as new independent claims 20 and 21, respectively. Accordingly, the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

While this application should now be in condition for allowance, in the event that any issues should remain, or any new issues arise, after consideration of this response which could be addressed through discussions with the undersigned, then the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned by telephone for the purpose of resolving any such issue and thereby facilitating prompt approval of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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